

**CITY OF BELGRADE
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
January 17, 2023 (Tuesday)
7:00 PM**

This meeting was open to the public and attended in person.

Mayor Russell C. Nelson called the meeting to order. Council Members in attendance were Martha Sellers, Mike Meis, Jim Simon and Renae Mattimoe. Council Members in attendance via Zoom video were Kristine Menicucci and Jim Doyle.

City staff in attendance were City Manager Neil Cardwell, City Attorney Rick Ramler, Executive Assistant Dana Jambor, Police Chief Dustin Lensing, City Engineer Tom Eastwood, Community Development Director Jason Karp, Library Director Gale Bacon, HR Director Becky Wilbert, Public Works Director Steve Klotz, City Judge Chris Gregory, Fire Chief Greg Tryon.

Others in attendance were Vivian Crouse, Kali Peterson, Aleck Gantick, Karen Davis.

PUBLIC FORUM

Mayor Nelson called three times for public comment. There being none, public forum was closed.

CONSENT AGENDA

-Consider Approval of Draft Council Minutes: 10/4/21, 10/18/21, 1/3/23

ACTION: Council Member Simon moved to approve the consent agenda items as submitted. Council Member Meis seconded the motion. All voted aye, motion carried unanimously.

DISCUSSION AGENDA

Proclamation regarding Arbor Day – April 28, 2023

Mayor Nelson read the Proclamation acknowledging April 28, 2023 as Arbor Day.

Discuss and Consider Public Access and Utility Easement for Tract 1a, COS 78A Yukon Lane

City Engineer Eastwood reviewed the requested Easement which was related to the FedEx Ground project just north of East Frank Road. He noted that the agreement had been reviewed by the property owners and the City Attorney. This would complete the road from Yukon through to Frank Road.

Mayor Nelson called for public comment. There was none.

ACTION: Council Member Sellers moved to approve and authorize the City Manager to sign a public access easement and utility agreement for Track 1A, CIOS 78A. Council Member Mattimoe seconded the motion. All voted aye, motion carried unanimously.

Discuss Possible Changes to the Wastewater Allocation Policy

City Engineer Eastwood reviewed the current policy and noted how it applied to properties annexed before January 1, 2020 and that they had to be within 500 feet of existing water lines to be considered for available allocations. This was on a first come, first served basis. Eastwood asked what direction Council would like to take going forward.

Discussion followed about capacity levels of the upgraded water treatment facilities. Eastwood noted there would be approximately 2,000 more units of capacity and how current developments would affect and reduce this capacity. He noted the option of shifting the Annexation date to 2022 or 2023 and giving consideration to certain land use types in order of preference for allocations going forward. As an example, he noted commercial developments which typically put less strain on wastewater resources.

Council discussed the need to keep encouraging and allowing development and noted that Commercial developments were good for generating revenue and jobs.

City Manager Cardwell commented that staff had discussed moving toward a commercial-first approach, 2nd to multi-family and 3rd to residential. In regard to schools coming in on the south side of town, carving out a pre-allocation may be warranted for such schools in addition to pending fire stations. Cardwell noted the challenges to remain open to development while navigating regulatory requirements.

Council inquired about the legal aspect of changing the order of allocations. Eastwood noted that with this discussion, staff would bring back a proposal. This would be reviewed by the City Attorney for Council's further consideration and approval.

City Attorney Ramler noted he agreed that this would require thorough review. It was not the goal to prevent development but there was a reality of how much capacity was available. All of the existing annexation service plans in place referenced limited capacity so developers were also given such notice.

Mayor Nelson called for public comment. There was none.

Discuss Upcoming Special Meeting regarding Regional Parks, Trails and Recreation District

City Manager Cardwell noted that a special Council meeting had been scheduled for Thursday, January 26, 2023 at 7:00pm in the Council Chambers. The item for consideration would be a Resolution to approve and call for a special mail ballot election proposed for May 2, 2023. Cardwell reviewed the questions that would be put before voters regarding creation of a Regional Parks, Trails and Recreation District and an associated Bond in the amount of \$49,000,000 that would be used to construct a Belgrade Aquatics and Recreation Center. Cardwell noted that the

County Commission would be considering their related Resolution at the County meeting on Tuesday, January 24, 2023. The County meeting would take place at 9:00 a.m. at the Ag Extension Building due to renovations at their regular meeting chambers. Cardwell noted that the resolution and interlocal agreement had been reviewed by the County and Election Administrators and Attorneys for content.

REPORTS

Mayor Nelson reported that he and City Manager Cardwell and Council Member Meis had traveled to Helena yesterday to provide testimony at a hearing regarding Senate Bill 142. This Bill had proposed changes to impact fees in terms of reporting requirements, time restrictions and providing a larger percentage of the fees to the Department of Commerce. The Mayor noted that four individuals had spoken in favor of the Bill. Many more spoke against the measure with representatives from the cities of Belgrade, Whitefish, Bozeman, Missoula, Billings and Butte. There was also the potential that the Governor's Office had an opinion that they would probably share with the Senate Committee. They expected that the Committee would decide later in the week. Mayor Nelson anticipated more trips to Helena would be coming up as needed.

City Attorney Ramler had nothing to report.

City Manager Cardwell thanked Kelly Lynch as Director of Montana League of Cities and Towns (MLCT) for keeping us informed and how we could help coordinate efforts to make our voices heard. He reported on House and Senate versions of an upcoming Bill that would drastically change how mill levy structures would work. It could remove the ability for cities to ask for permanent mill levies, would also require 50% participation of electors to make it valid, reduce the length of a mill levy to a max of 6 years. Cardwell discussed how these actions would be detrimental to cities and to Belgrade in particular. Although disturbing, very few elections have achieved 50% of voter participation. This in itself would pose quite a challenge.

Cardwell asked Council members to let him know if they would like to assist when he received notification of future hearing dates.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Council Member Mattimoe was excited to see an Ice Cream truck coming to our area this summer.

Council Member Menicucci reported that there was no snow in Pennsylvania.

Council Member Doyle had nothing to report.

Council Member Simon reported attending the Fire Board meeting for January. They noted a positive increase in those willing to participate as volunteer firefighters. They also reported on the conversion of Station 2 to living quarters and pulling resources back to Belgrade and Four Corners. Simon asked Council Member Doyle if he would be able to attend the February Fire Board meeting in his place. Doyle said he would.

Council Member Meis reported on the recent Planning Coordination Committee (PCC) meeting. He discussed upcoming discussions to include census data and more round table meetings to be scheduled.

Council Member Sellers announced her decision to step down from serving as Council Member for Ward 3 and that this would be her final meeting. She noted that she would not be able to attend the Library Board meeting next week. She thanked the Mayor and other Council Members for their assistance as she learned her role. She thanked Community Development Director Karp for taking the time to answer her many questions and Library Director Bacon for her assistance during her time serving on the Library Board over the past year. She thanked City staff for all the hard work and was amazed at the things they were able to accomplish.

Mayor Nelson thanked Council Member Sellers for her dedication and hard work in serving on the Council and wished her well.

Mayor Nelson commented on how to apply or submit a letter of interest to be appointed to serve as Council Member for Ward 3 and that more information would be posted on the City website.

ADJOURN

Council Member Simon moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:51p.m.


Russell C. Nelson, Mayor

Attest:


Susan Caldwell, City Clerk